

For Immediate Release
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WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE

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Bill Takes Aim at Milwaukee Gun Violence

(Madison, WI) - The City of Milwaukee has a violent crime problem involving firearms. Last year, 125 people died in gun violence and another 60 died so far in 2017.

On Wednesday, State Senator Alberta Darling and State Representative Joe Sanfelippo released a public safety bill to address violent crimes plaguing the City of Milwaukee. The legislation clarifies current law making it illegal to be a "straw purchaser" of firearms, makes it illegal for someone to be a "human holster," and creates a mandatory minimum sentence for habitual criminals who commit a crime involving a firearm.

"Milwaukee is one of the state's primary economic and cultural engines. If we want to continue to grow Wisconsin we need to tackle the City's crime problem," said Darling, "This bill is an important step forward, making it easier for prosecutors to lock up violent criminals without infringing on the constitutional rights of law abiding citizens."

Milwaukee's police department seizes the same amount of firearms as New York City, a city with 15 times the population. Part of the problem is that criminals, who are not allowed to own a gun, are given to them by individuals who can legally purchase them.

This bill creates criminal penalties for "straw purchasers," individuals who purchase a firearm for someone who cannot legally own one, and "human holsters," individuals who hold a gun for an individual who cannot legally have one. The bill also creates a four-year mandatory minimum sentence for habitual

criminals, defined as someone who has committed three or more misdemeanors or one felony within a five-year period, who commit a crime using a firearm.

"This legislation will help keep firearms out of the hands of violent repeat offenders," Sanfelippo said, "We must take action to prevent habitual criminals from continuing to victimize our communities."

Senator Darling and Representative Sanfelippo are currently seeking co-sponsors for the legislation.

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